DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 466 339 RC 023 559

TITLE	Guidelines for Culturally Responsive School Boards.
INSTITUTION	Alaska Univ., Fairbanks. Alaska Native Knowledge Network.
SPONS AGENCY	Alaska Univ., Fairbanks. Center for Cross-Cultural Studies.; Alaska Federation of Natives, Anchorage.
PUB DATE	2002-02-04
NOTE	12p.; Also sponsored by the Association of Interior Native Educators and the Consortium for Alaska Native Higher Education. Adopted by the Assembly of Alaska Native Educators, Anchorage, Alaska, February 4, 2002.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/SchoolBoardGuidelines/.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Role; *Alaska Natives; *American Indian Education; Board of Education Role; *Boards of Education; Community Involvement; Cultural Awareness; *Culturally Relevant Education; Educational Administration; *Educational Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; Guidelines; Participative Decision Making; *School Community Relationship
IDENTIFIERS	Alaska; *Board Member Responsibility; Tribal Elders

ABSTRACT

These guidelines address issues related to the role of school boards, including local school/community committees and advisory boards, in overseeing the provision of a culturally responsive and supportive educational environment for the students in their care. The guidelines are organized around various leadership roles related to the management of formal education systems, including those of board members, administrators, communities, professional educators, and statewide policy makers. Special attention is given to educational implications for the integration of traditional values and decision-making processes in schools throughout Alaska. These guidelines aim to more fully engage cultural communities in the social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development of Alaska's youth, and to assist educational personnel and others seeking to incorporate the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools in their work. Throughout the document, Elders are accorded a central role as the primary source of cultural knowledge. Following an introduction, the guidelines are listed in sections addressed to school board members; local school/community committees; school district administrators; communities, tribes, and Native organizations; principals and teachers; schools; state policy makers and educational agencies; and the general public. Eleven general recommendations stipulate the kind of initiatives needed to implement the guidelines. (TD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

GUIDELINES FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOL BOARDS

ED 466 339

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
R. Barnhardt
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

Sponsored by:

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
ALASKA RURAL SYSTEMIC INITIATIVE
ALASKA RURAL CHALLENGE
CENTER FOR CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES
ALASKA NATIVE KNOWLEDGE NETWORK
CIULISTET RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION OF INTERIOR NATIVE EDUCATORS
SOUTHEAST NATIVE EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION
NORTH SLOPE IÑUPIAQ EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION OF NATIVE EDUCATORS OF THE LOWER KUSKOKWIM
ASSOCIATION OF NORTHWEST NATIVE EDUCATORS
NATIVE EDUCATORS OF THE ALUTIIQ REGION
ASSOCIATION OF UNANGAN/UNANGAS EDUCATORS
ALASKA NATIVE EDUCATION STUDENT ASSOCIATION
ALASKA NATIVE EDUCATION COUNCIL
ALASKA FIRST NATIONS RESEARCH NETWORK
CONSORTIUM FOR ALASKA NATIVE HIGHER EDUCATION
Ilisagvik College
Interior ATHABASCAN Tribal College
Southeast Alaska Tribal College

Adopted by the
Assembly of Alaska Native Educators
Anchorage, Alaska
February 4, 2002

GUIDELINES FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOL BOARDS

The following guidelines address issues related to the role of school boards (including local school/community committees and advisory boards) in overseeing the provision of a culturally responsive and supportive educational environment for the students in their care. The guidelines are organized around various leadership roles related to the management of formal education systems, including those of board members, administrators, communities, professional educators and statewide policy makers. Special attention is given to the educational implications for the integration of traditional values and decision-making processes in schools throughout Alaska. The guidance offered in the

RC 023559

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

following pages is intended to encourage schools to strive to be reflections of their communities by incorporating and building upon the rich cultural traditions and knowledge of the people indigenous to the area. It is hoped that these guidelines will help to more fully engage communities (including cultural sub-communities in urban areas) in the social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development of Alaska's youth.

Native educators from throughout the state contributed to the development of these guidelines through a series of workshops and meetings associated with the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative. Representatives of the Native educator organizations listed on the cover participated in the meetings and ratified the final document. The purpose of these guidelines is to offer assistance to educational personnel and others who are seeking to incorporate the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools, along with all the associated guidelines, in their work. Using these guidelines will expand the knowledge base and range of insights and expertise available to help communities nurture healthy, confident, responsible and well-rounded young adults through a more decentralized and culturally responsive educational system.

Throughout this document Elders are accorded a central role as the primary source of cultural knowledge. It should be understood that the identification of "Elders" as culture-bearers is not simply a matter of chronological age, but a function of the respect accorded to individuals in each community who exemplify the values and life-ways of the local culture and who possess the wisdom and willingness to pass their knowledge on to future generations. Respected Elders serve as the philosophers, professors and visionaries of a cultural community, and as such, they are the beacons and calming agents that guide the people who look up to them. In addition, many aspects of cultural knowledge can be learned from other members of a community who have not yet been recognized as Elders, but seek to practice and teach local life-ways in culturally appropriate ways.

Along with these guidelines are a set of general recommendations aimed at stipulating the kind of initiatives that need to be taken to achieve the goals for which they are intended. State and federal agencies, universities, professional associations, school districts and Native communities should review their policies, programs and practices and adopt these guidelines and recommendations to strengthen their cultural responsiveness. In so doing, the educational development of students throughout Alaska will be enriched and the future well-being of the communities being served will be enhanced.

Support for implementation of these guidelines can be obtained from the regional Native educator associations, the member Tribal Colleges of the Consortium for Alaska Native Higher Education and the staff of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative. Further information on issues related to the implementation of these guidelines, as well as additional copies may be obtained from the Alaska Native Knowledge Network, Box 756730, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK 99775 (http://www.ankn.uaf.edu).

Guidelines for Culturally Responsive School Board Members

School district board members are responsible for providing guidance and oversight to insure that district policies and practices nurture the cultural well-being of the students and reflect the long-term interests of the communities being served.

School district board members will develop a more culturally responsive educational system through the following actions:

a. Adopt the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools as a matter of school district policy and use them for guidance in all matters related to educational policy, management and practice in the school district. Implement a regular review process to determine the extent to which the

Cultural Standards are reflected in the district and school programs.

b. Always assume a positive and proactive role as advocate for the educational interests of the broader community/region being served (not just special interests) and consider the long-term implications of individual issues and concerns that arise.
c. Consult with as many constituents as possible on a regular basis and seek out all points of view before forming an opinion and taking a position on significant educational issues.
d. When acting in an official capacity as a school board member, always place the educational needs of the students and communities over private interests or personal gain.
e. Seek out guidance and assistance from Elders for incorporating traditional values and ways of knowing in passing on cultural knowledge to younger generations. Appoint an Elder-Advisor to serve with the school board and implement an Elders-in-Residence program in the schools to involve Elders in all aspects of the educational program.
f. Serve as a role model and mentor for cultural learning by practicing and reinforcing traditional values and behaviors in the everyday life of the community.
g. Encourage and support on-going two-way interaction between school and community and volunteer to assist in the educational programs as a model for all parents to gain first-hand understanding of what students are learning. Issue a timely and understandable annual report on student performance that is distributed to and discussed with all parents.
h. Acquire and practice the knowledge and skills needed to be an effective parent, and implement programs that assist new parents in their role as care-givers and the first teachers of their children.
i. Be an active participant in school board affairs, including helping formulate the board meeting agenda; preparing for and attending all meetings; reviewing minutes, budgets and other pertinent documents; keeping well informed on current issues; seeking advice and training in areas of weakness; and maintaining regular contact with the communities and schools being represented.
j. Prepare board meeting agenda so that the primary focus of discussion in every meeting is on the educational programs in the district, with everything else justified on that basis.
k. When conducting school board business, interact and speak with consideration, care and courtesy, respecting differences of opinion and refraining from personal attacks and name-calling. Serve as a model of respect for cultural and individual differences.
l. Implement strategic planning activities that make use of traditional forms of communication and provide ample opportunity for discussion to insure maximum participation of all community members in the formation of school district mission, goals and strategies. Make sure all administrators understand and are in agreement with the school board on the long-range educational goals of the district.
m. Whenever possible, delegate decision-making responsibility to the local school/community committees and seek their input in all actions that may impact their sites, including interviewing candidates for local positions. Provide detailed reports back to each school and community following official meetings and actions. Check to make sure board actions have been properly interpreted by the administrators.
n. Recognize the role of the superintendent as the person responsible for the day-to-day administration of the policies established by the school district board and select a person for that role whose views and goals are compatible with those of the board, so as to minimize potential conflict between the policy-making and administration/implementation functions. Establish annual performance goals for the superintendent and evaluate his/her performance accordingly.
o. When selecting new personnel, give first preference to eligible local candidates who are knowledgeable about the surrounding area and have a life-long commitment to the region. Provide ample professional development opportunities for such personnel to continue to expand their capacity to provide leadership and support in the schools and district.
p. Establish a career ladder program for school district employees as a way to "grow your own" staff and thus maintain continuity and accrue cumulative insight in the development and implementation of educational programs.
q. Rotate school board meetings in all the communities served by the district and provide ample opportunity for public input through informal work sessions prior to each meeting and public comment periods during each meeting. Meet in community facilities as well as in the school, and showcase student work and acknowledge good teachers whenever possible. Invite the schools to make a presentation to the board (with students, parents and teachers involved) on some positive aspect of their educational program.

r. Coordinate educational programs and services with other local and regional entities as much as possible to insure best use of available resources.
s. Participate in statewide and regional forums to maintain a current understanding of educational issues and to insure your district is well represented in decision-making arenas that impact the communities and schools you serve. Choose the best qualified persons to represent the district in such events and sponsor local forums to provide regular reports back to the communities on what you have learned and the actions taken at meetings.
t. Encourage broad community participation in school board meetings, including recruiting others to seek election to the board. Appoint a student as an ex-officio member of the board to bring a student voice to the deliberations. School board terms should be scheduled on a staggered basis to maintain a level of program continuity. Board membership should be viewed as a community service, not as a career or as a source of income.
u. Provide educational facilities that are designed to blend into the community, that are culturally welcoming and comfortable for students and parents to use, and that contribute to the health and well-being of the community.

Guidelines for Culturally Responsive Local School/Community Committees

Local school/community committees provide the foundation on which the social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual well-being of future generations rests.

Local school committee members will promote a more culturally responsive schooling environment through the following actions:

a. Make use of the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools and the Guidelines for Nurturing Culturally Healthy Youth for effective guidance in all matters related to education in the school and community (both documents are available free from the Alaska Native Knowledge Network).
b. Encourage all members of the community to take an active role in the education and cultural up-bringing of local children and youth, at home and in school.
c. Organize regular meetings with parents, grandparents and teachers in the community to explore ways for schools to incorporate traditional values and ways of knowing in the educational programs/practices, and for parents to provide a nurturing family and home environment.
d. Provide an annual open house/workshop (with food) for parents, perhaps at each grade level, on how they can help their child be successful at what they will be learning during the year, and seeking their ideas on the aspirations they have for their child.
e. Encourage parents to regularly accompany their child through part or all of a school day to gain an understanding of what they are doing in school.
f. Encourage all children and their families to become actively involved in cultural activities and learn the traditional values and language of the community.
g. Assist in the implementation of a cultural orientation program for new teachers and establish an adopt-a-teacher program linking a local family and Elders with each teacher in the local school.
h. Assist teachers in understanding the importance of integrating local knowledge and ways of knowing into the curriculum and help them gain access to related resources that enhance all learning and links academic subject matter to students lives, not just as another subject added on as an extra-curricular activity at the end of the day.
i. Review the Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages and take appropriate actions to insure compliance with Alaska Senate Bill 103 requiring the establishment of a local Language Advisory Committee for each school with 50% or greater Native enrollment to make recommendations regarding the future of the heritage language in their community.
j. Serve as a positive role model and mentor for parents and children in your community by

practicing and reinforcing traditional values and cultural behaviors.

k. Take an active role in all district-level educational activities and provide input to the district school board on educational issues of concern to your school and community, including the selection and performance of local school staff.
l. Provide encouragement and support for community members (students, aides, teachers) who show an interest in pursuing a career in education.
m. Maintain on-going two-way communication with the school district board, including regular reports of local community meetings and representation at all district-level meetings.
n. Assist local administrators in planning staff development activities, including curriculum development workshops and community/cultural orientation programs.
o. Adopt policies and practices that provide opportunities for community members to actively participate in the review of local instructional programs.

Guidelines for Culturally Responsive School District Administrators

Culturally responsive school district administrators provide support for school board members and district staff in integrating cultural considerations in all aspects of the educational system.

School district administrators will support culturally responsive school boards through the following actions:

a. Make use of the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools for guidance in all matters related to educational policy and practice in the school district. Implement a regular review process to determine the extent to which the Cultural Standards are used in the district and school programs.
b. Support curricular and instructional strategies that connect the formal school curriculum to the cultural and physical world in which the students are situated.
c. Support student participation in subsistence activities with parents, Elders and other members of the community by providing avenues for students to earn credit while learning the knowledge and ways of knowing associated with those activities.
d. Be actively involved in local activities and organizations that contribute to the quality of life in your community/district and encourage all school district staff to do the same.
e. Respect what the Elders have to offer by including them as significant advisors and contributors to the educational system, including in the district office.
f. Facilitate broad-based parent and community involvement in all aspects of education in your school district, including planning, policy-making and educational practice.
g. Implement a decentralized decision-making structure that allows the educational system to evolve in response to the conditions in the communities being served. Adopt a position of openness and receptivity to alternative perspectives and support attitudes and approaches that allow actions to be taken at the most local level possible.
h. Always be a good role model as an educational leader in your community/district.
i. Use the Guidelines for Nurturing Culturally Healthy Youth and the Alaska Association of School Boards assets-building program to work with individuals, schools and community groups to promote positive expectations for the community's youth.
j. Recruit and employ local staff who are knowledgeable about the cultural heritage and language traditions of the surrounding area and have a life-long commitment to the region. Provide ample professional development opportunities for such personnel to continue to expand their capacity to provide leadership and support in the schools and district. Encourage new teachers to learn from those who are well grounded in the local community and culture.
k. When developing evaluation criteria for school personnel, make allowances for the range of teaching practices that are necessary to meet student needs in culturally diverse situations,

including those reflected by teachers utilizing Native ways of knowing.

l. Arrange for school district sponsorship of regular cultural orientation programs (minimum of one week, based on the Yaaveskaaniyaraq model) for new staff, including participation in a local cultural immersion camp in collaboration with local community organizations.
m. Use the Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages to insure compliance with Alaska Senate Bill 103 requiring the establishment of a local Language Advisory Committee for each school with 50% or greater Native enrollment to make recommendations regarding the future of the heritage language in their community.
n. Attend local and regional agency/organization meetings/conferences and provide reports on school district activities as a way to help coordinate educational and related service activities.

Guidelines for Culturally Responsive Communities, Tribes and Native Organizations

Culturally responsive school boards must rely on the communities they serve to provide a healthy and supportive environment that reinforces the values and behaviors its members wish to instill in their future generations.

Communities will assist a culturally responsive school board through the following actions:

a. Support the selection of school board and local school/community committee members who recognize that the children of the community are its future and will work to ensure that every child grows up secure on who they are and confident in their ability to make their own way in the world. Once selected, hold them accountable for the responsibilities they have assumed.
b. Use the Guidelines for Nurturing Culturally Healthy Youth to strengthen the parenting roles as reflected in traditional kinship structures by adopting child-rearing as a collective responsibility, and make sure all community members know their kinship roles and responsibilities.
c. Sponsor and participate in regular parent/youth talking circles in the community.
d. Promote healthy community activities and supportive organizations by involving youth as board members and participants in all functions, meetings, workshops, and events related to community well-being.
e. Organize local and regional planning meetings that lead to a consensus on strategies for consistent support of young people from all the sectors of the community that impact their lives (home, school, Elders, church, community organizations, cultural events, media etc.)
f. Be a good role model for and engage youth in all aspects of community life, including involvement in youth-run organizations and councils and participation in Native corporation and tribally-sponsored activities.
g. Participate in and contribute to all aspects of the educational system serving your community, including taking an active role in regional and local school board meetings.
h. Provide encouragement and support for community members (students, aides, teachers) who show an interest in pursuing a career in education.
i. Sponsor a cultural orientation program for new school staff and include them in community activities and events. Implement an adopt-a-teacher program linking new staff to a family and Elders in the community.
j. Incorporate the cultural standards for communities and parents into daily life, as outlined in the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools.
k. Foster the incorporation of traditional knowledge, values and beliefs in all aspects of community life and institutional practices and assist Elders in their participation as the local culture bearers.
l. Include the local school in all community development plans so that educational program and facilities are compatible with the long-term aspirations of the community.
m. Convene an annual community- or region-wide planning meeting of all local and regional social service, health, economic, cultural and educational programs to coordinate services for mutual

support and benefit to the communities.

n. Develop a comprehensive tribal education policy that addresses the role of language, culture and community in the education of local youth, and implement the policy through strong partnership arrangements with the schools.

Guidelines for Culturally Responsive Principals and Teachers

Educators are responsible for providing a supportive learning environment that reinforces the cultural well-being of the students in their care in a manner consistent with school board policy.

Educators (teachers, principals, aides, counselors, etc.) will support a culturally responsive school board through the following actions:

a. Align all subject matter with the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools and develop curriculum models that are based on the local cultural and environmental experiences of the students.
b. Provide accurate information regarding all aspects of school performance to assist the school board in its deliberations on district policies and practices. Utilize multiple indicators in any assessment of student abilities or teacher/school performance.
c. Adopt curricular and instructional strategies that make effective use of the cultural and natural world in which the students are situated to enrich and give meaning to what is being taught. Instruction in the local language in the early grades should be made available as a first option for instruction.
d. Make effective use of local expertise, especially Elders, as co-teachers whenever local cultural knowledge is being addressed in the curriculum. Include all staff in school planning meetings (i.e., teachers, aides, cooks, janitors, student assistants, etc.). Provide support in the curriculum for students to participate in subsistence activities with community members as a part of the school program.
e. Take steps to recognize and validate all aspects of the knowledge students bring with them and assist them in their on-going quest for personal and cultural affirmation. Avoid limiting the curriculum to any single measure of success.
f. Develop the observation and listening skills necessary to acquire an in-depth understanding of the knowledge system indigenous to the local community and apply that understanding in teaching practice.
g. When evaluating teaching personnel, make allowances for the range of teaching practices that are necessary to meet student needs and learning styles in culturally diverse situations, including those reflected by teachers utilizing Native ways of knowing. Encourage new teachers to learn from those who are well grounded in the local community and culture.
h. Visit the student's homes and learn about the parents aspirations for their children as well as their expectations for you. Provide a supportive environment for parent participation in all aspects of their children's education, including that which takes place during subsistence activities. Adjust the school schedule to accommodate local cultural activities and events.
i. Carefully review all curriculum resource materials with appropriate local experts and/or curriculum committees to insure cultural accuracy and appropriateness, and assist students in making similar critical judgments themselves.
j. Make every effort to utilize locally relevant curriculum materials with which students can readily identify, including materials prepared by Alaska Native authors.
k. Participate in community events and activities, including local tribal and municipal government meetings, to acquire the insights and relationships needed to develop appropriate motivation and discipline practices in the school.

Guidelines for Schools Serving Culturally Responsive Boards

Schools must be fully engaged with the life of the communities they serve so as to provide consistency of expectations with those of a culturally responsive school board.

Schools will contribute to school board implementation of a culturally responsive education through the following actions:

a. Promote the incorporation of the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools in all aspects of the school curriculum, while demonstrating their applicability in providing multiple avenues to meet the State Content Standards.
b. Establish an easily accessible repository of culturally appropriate resource materials and a reliable process for the daily involvement of knowledgeable expertise, including respected Elders, from the community.
c. Provide developmentally appropriate curricula that take into account the cultural variability of the social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs of each child and community, especially during the critical period of identity formation that takes place during the adolescent years.
d. Utilize the natural environment of the community to move educational activities beyond the classroom as a way of fostering place-based education and deepening the learning experiences of students.
e. Support the implementation of an Elders-in-Residence program in the school and classroom and teach respect for Elders at all times. Use the Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge to assist in incorporating Elders into the school setting in ways that are natural and beneficial for all concerned.
f. Provide an in-depth cultural orientation program for all new teachers and administrators in collaboration with the local community.
g. Make use of locally produced resource materials (reports, videos, maps, books, tribal documents, etc.) in all subject areas and work in close collaboration with local agencies to enrich the curriculum beyond the scope of commercially produced texts.
h. Utilize Elders and Native teachers from the local community to acquire a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the local, regional and statewide context in which the students live, particularly as it relates to the well-being and survival of the local culture.
i. Provide community access to and use of school facilities for cultural events and educational activities. The school should be viewed as an extension of the community, for use at the local school/community committees discretion.
j. Encourage and support school staff in activities celebrating the local culture, heritage and environment (e.g., photo gallery of Elders in school hallway, local art/craft work displays, traditional demonstrations and historical displays, Elders birthday celebrations, or culturally appropriate bulletin board displays).

Guidelines for State Policy Makers and Educational Agencies

State policy-makers and educational agencies should provide a supportive policy, program and funding environment that promotes local standards and initiatives in the application of culturally responsive educational practices.

State policy-makers and educational agencies will nurture a more culturally responsive educational system through the following actions:

a. Review all state policies, programs and funding structures as they relate to the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools, the Guidelines for Nurturing Culturally Healthy Youth and the Guidelines for Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers for Alaska's Schools and revise them as necessary to conform with these standards and guidelines.
b. Extend opportunities for local communities to exercise increased self-determination in the implementation of educational programs for their children (e.g., charter schools, schools-within-schools and tribal schools linked to tribal colleges).
c. Work with local communities to adopt educational policies and practices oriented toward the integration of traditional knowledge, ways of knowing and world views into educational systems in culturally appropriate ways
d. Work with schools to provide a supportive and affirming cultural climate for all students and seek to retain students in a culturally healthy environment as much as possible, without being subjected to racial and cultural prejudice and discrimination.
e. Provide an equitable and supportive funding environment for schools that insures every student an opportunity to grow up to be a healthy, capable and responsible adult, recognizing that equitable does not necessarily mean the same.
f. Provide multiple avenues and opportunities for students to demonstrate and apply what they have learned to become effective adults and contributing members of society. In all policy deliberations, adopt the adage, "One size does not fit all students".
g. Provide incentives to schools, districts and communities to develop support systems committed to the preparation of local indigenous teachers and administrators.
h. Extend the definition and use of the generic "standards" to include locally developed, contextually appropriate and culturally based guidelines and criteria.

Guidelines for the General Public

All citizens must assume greater responsibility for nurturing the diverse traditions by which each child grows to become a culturally healthy human being and selecting school board members who are willing to exercise that responsibility.

Members of the general public can help nurture a culturally responsive education system through the following actions:

a. Treat children and youth from all backgrounds with honor, dignity and respect and involve them in the activities of everyday life to the maximum extent possible &emdash; this is how they learn to become contributing adults.
b. Encourage and support Native peoples' efforts to apply their own child-rearing and parenting practices in the up-bringing of their children.
c. Recognize that all forms of success in school and in life depend first and foremost on developing a strong sense of personal and cultural identity, and that the formative adolescent years are the most critical for defining who we are in relation to others.
d. Celebrate that which we all share in common as members of a national society, as well as all the differences that make each of us unique and serve as the basis for the local and personal identities which enrich our lives and communities.
e. Contribute to and participate respectfully in local cultural events to gain a better understanding of the range of cultural traditions that coexist in Alaska.
f. Provide opportunities for young parents and children to interact regularly with Elders and other

experienced adults.

g. Make room in all community events for multiple cultural traditions to be represented.
h. Use popular media to promote positive role models for young people to emulate and to pass on the traditional teachings.
i. Ensure that school boards exercise their responsibility to provide educational opportunities for all children to achieve their full potential in ways that are culturally appropriate and personally affirming.

General Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered to support the effective implementation of the guidelines for culturally responsive school boards.

1. The First Alaskans Institute should assist in the formation of an Alaska Native School Board Association with the capacity to provide training and assistance for school board members to assume greater responsibility in shaping the agenda and direction for their district and fostering more culturally responsive educational systems to serve the needs of Alaska.
2. The Alaska Association of School Boards should incorporate the above guidelines into its school board training program and provide a supportive environment for their implementation by its members.
3. The Alaska Association of School Boards should continue to develop its assets-building program, "Helping Kids Succeed, Alaskan Style", including linking the program to the Guidelines for Nurturing Culturally Healthy Youth.
4. The Department of Education and Early Development should incorporate the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools and associated guidelines into its school accreditation review criteria.
5. The Department of Education and Early Development should provide incentives for school districts to incorporate cultural orientation programs into the annual district inservice schedule, including the provision for new teachers to spend several days in a cultural immersion camp.
6. Urban school boards should reflect the cultural makeup of the community they serve and encourage candidates representing major cultural groups to seek election to the board. Working groups appointed by the board and administration should also include a balanced representation of major cultural viewpoints.
7. School districts should sponsor opportunities for students to participate regularly in cultural immersion camps with parents, Elders and teachers sharing subsistence activities during each season of the year.
8. As regional Tribal Colleges are established, they should provide a support structure for the implementation of these guidelines in each of their respective cultural regions.
9. School boards should seek to re-establish the traditional education role of uncles, aunts, Elders and other members of the families and communities and explore ways to incorporate those roles, along with those of the parents, into the educational process.
10. The guidelines outlined above should be incorporated in university educational leadership courses and made an integral part of all professional preparation and cultural orientation programs.
11. An annotated bibliography of resource materials that address issues associated with these guidelines will be maintained on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network web site (www.ankn.uaf.edu).

Return to ANKN Home Page

Comments or questions? Contact the Alaska Native Knowledge Network.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").